POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Australia is keen to set up a power plant in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, whether Mr. Ralph Evans, Managing Director, Austrade and Australian Government organisation has moved the centre in this regard;

(c) if so, what is the reaction of the Central Government thereto; and

(d) by when the Central Government propose to give clearance to Austrade application?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) to (d) Australia has of late evinced interest in expanding the scope of Indo-Australian Cooperation in the power sector. However, the Government has not received any proposal from Australia for the setting up of a power plant in Tamil Nadu.

Units engaged in Diamond Processing Industry

2617. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of diamond processing units at present in the country and the number of persons employed therein;

(b) what is the amount of capital invested in this industry;

(c) quantum of exports of gems and jewellery during the last three years, year-wise, and foreign exchange earned during the same period; and

(d) steps being taken to boost exports in view of the current economic situation of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The diamond industry is scattered and extends to rural areas with a substantial segment in the unorganised sector. No census has been conducted of the extent of employment provided by this industry. The capital investment varies from unit to unit depending on the technology and the extent of mechanisation. No consolidated figures of the total capital employed in the industry are available.

(c) The foreign exchange earned from export of gems and jewellery during the last three years has been as follows:—

Year	Rs. Crores
1988-89	4565.28
1989-90	5479.37
1990-91	5336.83

Source: Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council.

(d) Government has taken a series of measures to enchance exports which, inter alia, include replenishment facility for diamond exporters to obtain rough diamonds, facility for opening of dollar account, repeal of the Gold Control Act and direct access to gold import for jewellery exporters.

Upgradation of Joint Chief Controller of Exim

2618. SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the last Pay Commission recommednded upgradation of existing posts of Joint Chief Controller of Imports and Exports at Delhi, Calcutta, Madras and Bombay to that of Directors in order to give more avenues of promotion to Central Trade Service; and

(b) whether these recommendations were considered and approved by Ministry of Finance and a notification to this effect was issued and placed on the Table of the Parliament; and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Keeping in view the cadre structure of the CTS and the work load of the regional offices at Bom-